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**STATE
SUPPLEMENTAL
PAYMENTS
to the
Aged,
Blind,
or
Disabled**

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**Illinois Department
of
Public Aid**

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STATE SUPPLEMENTAL PAYMENT (SSP) PROGRAM

Individuals in financial need who are 65 or older, or who are any age, but are blind or severely disabled as defined by the Social Security Administration and who have income insufficient to meet their basic maintenance needs may be eligible for a State Supplemental Payment (SSP).

Persons who have applied for the federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program through their local social security office and have not yet been notified of their eligibility status also may be eligible for a state grant (Interim Assistance) while eligibility for the federal program is being determined.

HOW TO APPLY

Application for a State Supplemental Payment is made at the office of the county department of public aid serving the area in which the applicant lives; in Cook County the application is made at the district office which serves the ZIP Code area where the applicant lives.

A person will be given any help needed to complete the application form. If a person cannot go to the office because of illness or disability, or for some other reason, a caseworker will take the application in the applicant's home.

When a person has a legally appointed conservator or guardian, the conservator or guardian must file the application. If a person is physically or mentally unable to file an application but has no conservator or guardian, the application can be made by a relative or other person who has sufficient knowledge of the applicant's circumstances to furnish the necessary information.

FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Financial Eligibility. A person who does not have enough non-exempt income and/or

assets from any source to meet his needs according to the standards of the Department of Public Aid may be eligible for assistance.

Exempt Assets. In determining the existence and extent of need for a State Supplemental Payment, the following assets are exempt: homestead property; clothing and personal effects (except jewelry of extraordinarily high value); household furnishings; business or farming equipment essential for the production of income; motor vehicle(s) except those primarily used for recreational purposes; burial crypt, cemetery lot and/or vault; grave marker; group life insurance held as a condition of employment or provided by employer; other life insurance when the total cash value or death benefit does not exceed \$1,000 per person; the principal portion of a trust fund when the instrument establishing the trust specifically states the principal cannot be impaired; a prepaid burial plan of \$1,000 or less if there is no other form of life insurance; assets necessary for fulfillment of a blind person's approved plan for achieving self-support; and cash or savings accounts with a cash value not exceeding \$400 for a single person or \$600 for a client and spouse living together.

Exempt Income. A \$25.00 income exemption is allowed in determining eligibility for SSP.

In addition, for aged or disabled clients, the first \$20 of gross earned income plus one-half of the next \$60 is exempt as are certain expenses of employment in arriving at the amount of non-exempt income available to meet the client's needs.

Blind clients who are employed or self-employed are allowed exempt income amounting to the first \$85 of gross earned income plus one-half of the amount in excess of \$85. Additional amounts of income as may be necessary for fulfillment of a blind client's plan for achieving self-support may be exempt for a period not to exceed 12 months, upon the Department's approval.

NON-FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY FACTORS

Age. To qualify as aged, a person must be 65 years of age or over. There is no age requirement to qualify as blind or disabled.

Blindness or Disability. Persons applying for SSP because of blindness or disability must be examined by a physician so that the extent of blindness or disability can be determined. This examination is not required if the individual is receiving SSI payments, or primary social security benefits, or has an application for SSI pending determination of eligibility.

Citizenship. To be eligible for SSP an individual must be a citizen of the United States by birth or naturalization or an alien who has been legally admitted for permanent residence as an immigrant or under "color of law."

Residence. An applicant for SSP must be living in Illinois with intent to remain. A person may be eligible to receive SSP assistance while living in a sheltered care facility which meets state requirements of health and safety.

Agreement to Repay Interim Assistance. An agreement to repay Interim Assistance is a non-financial requirement of eligibility if the SSP applicant is also an SSI applicant.

Support from Relatives. Legal responsibility for contributing toward a relative's support is limited to spouse for spouse whether living together or not, and parents for children under 21 years of age, except that the parent is not responsible if a child age 18 or over has established a consistent pattern of independent living prior to application. Relatives legally responsible to provide assistance to members of their families are required to provide the Department with information about their financial circumstances and ability to support.

Transfer or Sale of Property. If a person applying for SSP has transferred real or personal property within five years of the application date without receiving fair market value, the applicant will be ineligible for assistance for five years from the date of the transfer,

unless he can provide acceptable proof that he did not dispose of the property to qualify for or increase his need for assistance.

If a person receiving assistance sells his property without informing the county department of public aid, sells it for less than its market value, transfers the deed without having the transaction recorded, or fails to show the amount received for the property on the deed, he may be ineligible to receive assistance, and the assistance payments may be discontinued.

Client Cooperation. Client cooperation in determining initial eligibility and continued eligibility is required. Failure of the client to cooperate will result in the denial or discontinuance of assistance based on the Department's inability to determine eligibility. Periodic redeterminations of eligibility for assistance are a program requirement.

Reporting Change of Circumstances. It is the duty of the client to report any change of circumstances or receipt of income or assets which might affect his assistance. Failure to do so may constitute fraud.

When a person receiving a State Supplemental Payment moves, the new address must be reported to the local office of the Department of Public Aid.

The post office will not forward assistance checks to a new address but will return any undeliverable checks to the State Comptroller's office in Springfield where they will be voided.

Assistance Payments. In determining the amount of a State Supplemental Payment, the living expenses of an applicant or a recipient are figured on the basis of allowances established by Department standards less available income, contributions, and assets available to the person for support.

A monthly assistance payment for living expenses is paid by check to the recipient.

Liens and Estate Claims. The State has a lien on real property owned by recipients of SSP and a claim against the estate of former recipients of Assistance to the Aged, Blind, or Disabled and recipients of State Supplemental Payments. Such lien or estate claim will be only in an amount equal to the amount of the assistance furnished to the recipient.

Public Registers. County departments and district offices are required by law to maintain in their offices registers showing the names, addresses, and amount of assistance received during the preceding month by recipients of SSP. By law the contents of Department records pertaining to applicants and recipients may not be disclosed except for the purpose of administering the programs and with client consent.

Right of Appeal. An applicant or recipient may appeal in writing within 60 days any decision of the local office which he thinks is unfair. The local office will provide a form which may be used in making the appeal. Legal fees are not paid by the Department. If a person appeals a proposed reduction or cancellation of assistance and the appeal is filed within the 10-day advance notice period, assistance may be continued during the hearing process.

For complete details, see brochure DPA 377, *The Right to Appeal and to Receive a Fair Hearing*.

Civil Rights. The Illinois Department of Public Aid administers all programs under its jurisdiction in conformance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, handicap or political affiliation of any applicant or recipient.

For complete details, see brochure DPA 592, *Public Aid and Civil Rights*.

Right to Apply. Any person who believes he may be eligible for SSP assistance has the right to apply.

OTHER SERVICES

Eligibility for Medical Assistance. Aged, blind, or disabled persons who receive state supplementation also are eligible for Medical Assistance. Claims will be made against their estates to recover the amount paid for medical services for recipients age 65 or over. However, the claim will be enforced only after the death of the surviving spouse and only when there is no surviving child who is under 21 or who is blind or permanently and totally disabled. For complete details, see brochure DPA 591, *The Medical Assistance Program*.

Funeral and Burial Expenses. Upon the death of a recipient of SSP, if the estate is insufficient to pay the funeral and burial expenses, and legally responsible relatives are unable to meet the costs, the Department may pay the funeral and burial expenses according to Department standards.

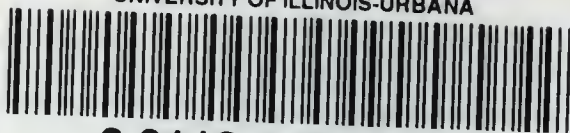
Food Stamps. Most persons receiving SSP are eligible to receive food stamps but will have to make application for them at a county or district office of public aid. Principal exceptions are those residing in commercial room and board homes, those who have no cooking facilities or are unable to prepare their meals, and those with restaurant allowances.

Social Services. Recipients of SSP are eligible for information, referral and follow-up services and for a range of social services provided by state and private agencies.



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